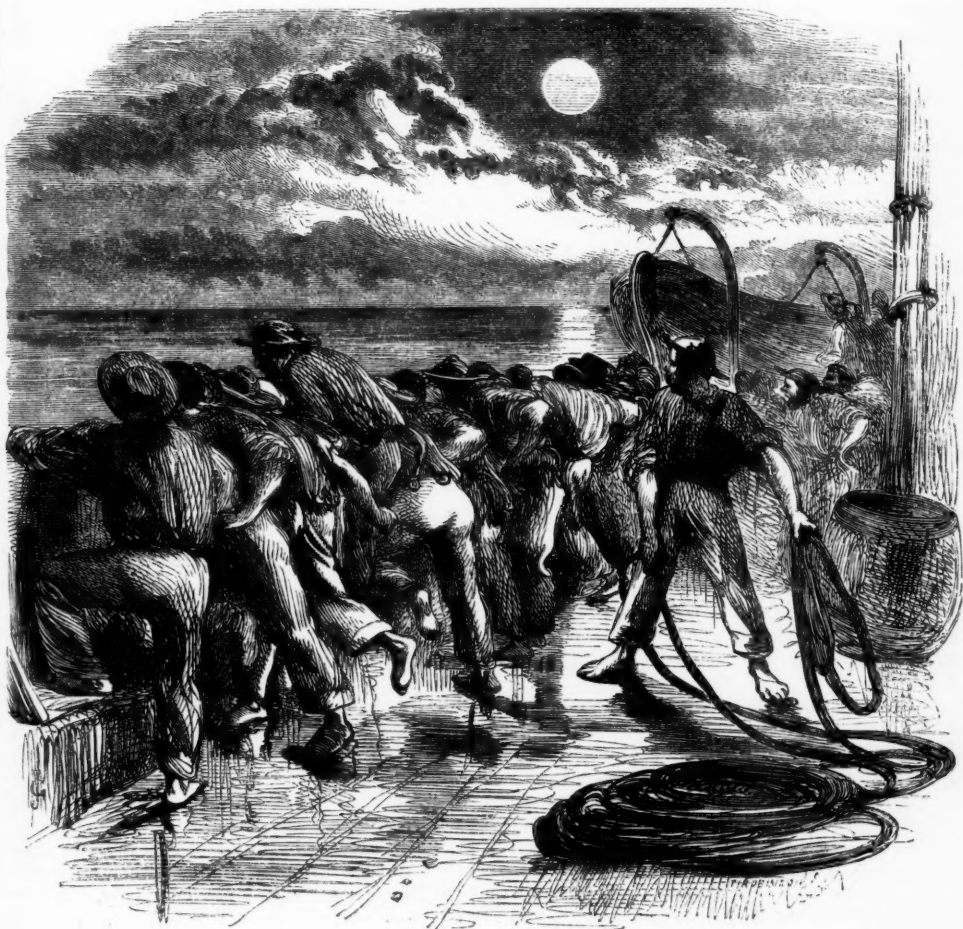


THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*



A MAN OVERBOARD.

AN OLD SAILOR'S STORY.

CHAPTER XV.—A TROPICAL SQUALL.

"A MAN overboard!"

No one who has once heard this cry can surely ever forget it. At least, I know that I have never forgotten the thrill which it caused, not in me only, this first time of my hearing it. We were in considerable hazard: the squall was hastening on with

fearful rapidity. In five minutes, perhaps in less, it would be upon us; but in an instant all work was momentarily suspended, until the stern shout of the captain, repeated by first mate and boat-swain, recalled the men to their half-forgotten duty.

A man overboard! What man? Those on deck did not know; but on the main-top-sail yard it was known, almost before the unfortunate man had

reached the water, that Mr. Wheeler had lost his footing and slipped from the yard-arm.

"And he can't swim any more than a stone," said one of the men, shifting along the foot-rope to the place thus left vacant.

"No use if he could," said another; "the water will be all in a boil before a man can say Jack Robinson."

Meanwhile, the few sailors on deck, earnest as they were in their duty, were not unmindful of the lost man, whoever he might be. Instinctively, rather than with any sane hope of rescuing him, the skylight gratings had been thrown overboard at the first alarm; and quick glances were cast on to the yet smooth water by those who were near the sides of the ship. There was still light enough on the surface, though the heavens above were so fast gathering blackness, for discerning objects in the immediate vicinity of the ship; but the poor wretch was nowhere to be seen. Had he been visible, I doubt whether the most reckless among the crew would have risked his life in an almost hopeless attempt to save the perishing man.

There was one, however, not on deck, but aloft; not a man, but a youth, who dared do this. I have said that Hugh Lawrence was at the opposite yard-arm; and in his earnestness to acquit himself like a true sailor, as he was, he was scarcely conscious of the fact that it was from that yard a man had fallen; and it was not until the sail was furled (it did not take long) that he was fully aware of this. But at that moment a gurgling shriek of despair arose from the sea beneath him, and, looking down, he dimly observed a dark object on the waves. It was the drowning man, who, falling on the starboard side of the ship, had sunk and been strangely and unaccountably drifted, as it seemed, beneath the keel of the ship, to rise exhausted on the larboard side, and was helplessly struggling, with the little senses he had left, to keep himself afloat. The man by Hugh's side looked down too.

"He might be saved, even now," said Hugh, straightening his back, and balancing himself on the foot-rope, with one hand on the yard-arm.

"Not a bit of it," said the man; "don't be a fool, sir, and throw your own life away," he added, for he saw that the young midshipman was prepared for a plunge; "the squall is upon us at this minute, and that's the last we shall ever see of Mr. Wheeler."

"Of whom?"

"Of Mr. Wheeler; it was him as——"

"Ben, I'm off. If I go down, ask our captain to break the news gently to my mother."

There was a plunge into the sea; but it was not heard, or, if heard, it was not noticed: for the squall was upon us, with a vengeance.

The squall was upon us: but we were prepared for it. A short time only had elapsed since the first little speck of cloud made its appearance, and gave us warning of the tornado, and now it came down upon us in all its fury; rain descended in torrents, as I had never before known rain to fall: it came in sheets of water, and not in drops; lightnings flashed in fearful succession, accompanied by

an incessant peal of awful thunder; the sea, when it was rendered visible by the lightning, was seen to be dashed into an angry yeasty foam, while the same glaring flash would show the tall masts of the ship, up to the trucks, bending with the fierce wind, which drove us through the water with irresistible fury, and again and again lay the ship almost broadside upon it. Well for us, then, that the tornado had not taken us quite unawares. Helpless as we were, we were tolerably secure amidst the war of elements, although the oldest and bravest among us were awe-stricken, as they held on by shrouds and ropes, looking aloft at intervals to see, by the lightning's glare, the yards swinging madly, and the top-masts dipping, now to starboard, and now to larboard, as the wind whirled the ship round, regardless of wheel and rudder.

Once during this terrible conflict there was a temporary lull in the fierce roaring wind, though the lightning continued to flash as vividly as before; and during this comparative calm, I felt a hand laid on my arm.

"Is this you, Davy?" It was Ned Finn's voice.

"Yes, Ned."

"You ought to have been below along with the other boys and the passengers."

"Ought I, Ned?"

"To be sure you ought. Didn't you hear the orders?"

"No, Ned."

"Well, it's too late now, for the hatches are all on: so you'll have to stand it out. How do you stand it now, Davy?"

"Pretty well."

"Not afeard?"

I could not say that; for, to tell the truth, I had been and was very considerably afraid. I would not have liked even Ned to know it at that time; but I may confess now, that the rain which had poured down upon me had been pretty freely mingled on my cheeks with genuine tears.

"Not a bit afeard, Davy?"

"Not much, Ned; only I should like to keep alongside of you, if I can."

"So you shall, Davy; and if you go overboard, I go with you," said the faithful fellow, holding me firmly with one hand, while he grasped a stay with the other.

"And Ned, won't you tell me about my father now?"

"Hush, Davy! Hark!" At that moment a sound like a distant shout, or rather, a faint wail, reached our ears; and not ours only, for, as we afterwards found, others heard it too. It seemed to rise out of the sea itself, though, with more probability, it was attributed to the passengers below. Ned, however, was of a different opinion.

"Did you hear that, Davy?"

"Yes, Ned; what is it?"

"Ay; you don't know what it means; but I've heard of such sounds afore, Davy; and I can give a guess: hark again!"

I listened; and again the distant shout or wail fell faintly on my ear. Sailors are superstitious, and Ned Finn was not above this weakness.

"There's more of it to come yet, Davy;" by the

"it" I understood him to mean the storm; "and——"

He did not finish what he began to say, for before the words could reach me, the squall freshened again, and the darkness, except when the lightning blazed around, was, if possible, blacker than before. I shall not, however, attempt a prolonged description of this fearful scene, in the midst of which a crash was felt rather than heard.

"There goes the mizen-top-mast," said Ned, who still kept close by my side, and retained his hold of me; and, looking up, I saw, by the bright blaze of a prolonged lightning flash, the mizen-top-mast hanging around the rigging. Then came darkness again.

Half an hour had passed away, and again the scene was changed. The sea was a little agitated, but that was all. Above was a clear, cloudless sky, studded with stars; the moon was quietly casting silvery light and faint shadows upon the deck; the wind had sunk into a gentle whisper; and the ship lay calmly and tranquilly on the water. All was activity now; a score or more men were clearing the wreck at the mizen-top, and others were at the pumps; for, in spite of closed hatches, a great quantity of water had been shipped, and it was conjectured that a slight leak had been sprung by the violent straining of the masts. While this was going on, several of the passengers, released from their enforced confinement, were on deck, contemplating with astonishment the wonderful transition they had experienced.

By this time, too, the ship's company had been mustered, and the names rapidly called over; for it was not known whether any, or how many, had been swept into eternity while the tornado was at its height. Two only were missing—Mr. Wheeler and Hugh Lawrence; and it was by this time understood how they had perished.

"A-hoy—a-hoy, on deck, there!" Faintly, but clearly and distinctly, the cry rose. It was the same cry which had been heard during the storm, and which had been set down by all who heard it then, as a portentous warning of coming doom. But it produced a different effect now.

"I say, Ben," said one main-top man to another, "that's no ghost."

"If it is, it's the ghost of poor Lawrence," said Ben, listening; "I should know his voice among a hundred."

The cry was repeated; and dozens rushed to the ship's sides, and, leaning over the bulwarks, cast their sight anxiously over the waste of waters in all directions. It was so light now, with the moon shining out full, and the sea was so quiet, that a very small matter afloat would have been plainly visible; but, strange to say, nothing could be seen.

The cry was repeated; and this time, those who listened and were prepared for measuring distances by the ear, declared that it proceeded from the ship's stern; and there was a rush in that direction, by those who were authorized to tread, or were bold enough to invade, the quarter-deck. Several of the officers, and a few of the passengers, were already there; but the voice, whatever it was, appeared to have no substance.

Once more the cry—more faintly than before, but distinctly enough; for it seemed now to rise from beneath the feet of the anxious and puzzled listeners.

"A-hoy! help, and help soon; we can't hold—on—much—longer."

"Where away?"

"In—the—rudder chains!"

There was no need for further explanation. In another minute the stern ladder was dropped, and the captain himself was upon it, while, almost as quickly, a boat was lowered from the starboard side and manned, and was soon hidden from those on the quarter-deck by the overhanging poop. But shouts were heard, and, above them all, the voice of Captain Phipps in tones of hearty encouragement; and when the boat again came in sight, it had others in it besides the rowers. In five minutes more, the second mate and Hugh Lawrence had been slung on deck, almost helpless and senseless, but otherwise uninjured. Their escape was marvellous. On plunging into the sea, to the rescue of the drowning man, Hugh was so happy as to lay hold of him before he sank, and to keep him afloat, swimming with him to the ship, hoping that a rope would be flung over to his assistance. But at that very moment the squall burst with its first force, and that hope was relinquished. All hope must have been abandoned if at that very time the ship had not swung round, and placed within reach of Hugh's hand the rudder chain, which offered the only means of self-rescue; and with amazing effort he had first assisted the mate, and then raised himself into the chains, where, though repeatedly immersed into the sea, and incessantly covered with its blinding spray, they had been in some measure sheltered from the storm which raged around and above, and had been enabled to hold on till assistance reached them. Well for them that the tornado was as short in its duration as it was furious in its progress.

They were speedily assisted to their berths, and the means used for their restoration were successful. But in stripping the young midshipman, a dark purple bruise was seen on his breast, caused, it was conjectured, by concussion, in first striking the water. I knew better than this, for I had seen the blow given; but no one else ever knew that the mark was made by an angry passionate blow of the tyrant and bully, to save whose life the young Christian middy ventured his own so soon afterwards.

CHAPTER XVI.—FIRE.

It was about a week or two after the squall, of which I have endeavoured to give some faint idea, that a yet more alarming accident happened, which proved fatal, not only to the unfortunate "Dover Castle," but to some of her crew.

I am aware how far short any history of such events as that which I have described, and am about to describe, must fall of the reality; so far short, indeed, as to appear really dull, and tame, and common-place, especially to any who have passed through such experiences; and I think my best way will be to go on telling my story, as I have hitherto told it, with as little attempt at display as

possible, and to avoid, as much as I can, matters which would be uninteresting to general readers.

The voyage had hitherto progressed favourably, with the exception of the squall, which was found to have wrought very little damage to our ship. We had rounded the Cape without experiencing any rough weather, and were sailing under the influence of a gentle wind. I am not able to tell the exact latitude and longitude of our position, though it was noted at the time, of course; but this is of no consequence.

I remember the night very well, as indeed I have reason to do. It was a calm quiet night, but dark. The larboard watch being on duty, I was below, very soundly asleep, when a sudden shout of "All hands on deck!" effectually roused every midshipman then below; and in a very short time we swarmed up the ladders, all wondering, no doubt, as I certainly did, at the cause of the summons, because there was no apparent change in the weather, and the ship was quietly moving along, with a second reef in her top-sails, as she had been when the watch was called.

We soon discovered the cause.

The upper deck forward was, by the time I sprang upon it, crowded with sailors, upon whom the ship's lanterns cast a dim lurid light as they moved to and fro hurriedly; some, who had composed the larboard watch, in their jackets and pea-coats, and others who had been suddenly roused, only partially dressed. Probably they had come upon deck, jackets in hand, and had thrown them down distractedly on discovering the imminence of the danger which threatened our destruction. In the midst of all the apparent tumult, there was perfect discipline, however; and no cries or shoutings were heard, to impede or confuse the clear short orders issued by the captain in quick succession, and repeated by his inferior officers as occasion required.

All this that I have described, and more, was but the observation of a moment; and I was hastening forward to the scene of evident excitement, if not absolute danger, when I ran against a sailor who was coming aft.

"Now, then, youngster," he said, hastily; but in the voice I recognised that of my faithful Ned.

"What is it, Ned?"

"Eh! is it you, Mr. Blake?" and then, bending down to me and whispering in my ear, "Don't be daunted, Davy; but this is as bad a job as our start in the Channel."

"You don't mean that we are run down, Ned?"

"No, no, Davy; worse than that a'most."

"Sprung a leak, then?"

"No, nor yet struck on a rock, neither; but look aloft, Davy," and he pointed to the half-reefed foresails and rigging. For the first time I observed that they were nearly obscured by what appeared to be a thick unnatural haze, while the lantern at the bow looked like a spot of dark crimson rayless light; and now, too, I noticed, what had not struck me before, that a choking, sulphury vapour and a faint smell of smoke pervaded the deck.

"Ned, is it——?"

I think Ned must have known what I was about

to say. He could not see my look of alarm and helplessness; it was too dark for that; but he heard the altered tone of my voice, and he stopped me short.

"Yes, Davy, that's it: the ship is ON FIRE."

"Oh! Ned; and can't it be put out?"

"We can try, Davy; and if the good Lord helps us, it will be," said he, very solemnly; and then he disappeared in the gloom on his errand, whatever that might be.

Oh, what a dreadful night that was! and when morning came, what a scene did it unfold! How the fire had arisen none could tell, but its origin was in the hold; and the first suspicion of it was a sense of suffocation which awoke the sailors in their berths, and drove them on deck to give the alarm to the watch.

To muster all hands on deck; to close the fore hatch, to prevent the current of air from fanning and feeding the flame; to furl every sail; to conduct pipes from the pump to the hold; to make way to the powder magazine in the after part of the ship, and to heave every barrel overboard; to calm down and quiet as far as possible the minds of the passengers (this was the captain's work first, and afterwards the surgeon's); to maintain discipline, even in the prospect of death; all this and more had been done; and yet, when morning came, all had been vain and ineffectual in staying the progress of the fire. By this time the ship, forward, was enveloped in a dense volume of smoke, which burst through every crevice of the hatchway and the seams in the deck. The deck itself was so hot, in spite of the water with which it was kept deluged, that the men shrunk from it in pain and desperation; and the quarter-deck was crowded with the ship's passengers, and all whose duties did not require their presence forward.

I shall never forget the conduct of the captain on this fearful night and succeeding day. He not only behaved personally as a brave man would in circumstances of such peril, but he infused courage into the minds of others by his coolness and self-command. Himself present where there appeared the greatest danger, and maintaining his post when the men were on the point of abandoning it, he prolonged the struggle to the last; and, what was of more consequence, retained his authority over the crew. I have known some instances, and heard of more, in which, in the hour of urgent danger on board ship, from fire, or wreck, or storm, all control has ceased, and the men have conducted themselves more like madmen and fiends than rational, accountable beings. It was not so on board the "Dover Castle."

SARDINIA AND THE SARDS

PART II.

THE Sard is fond of dress, and intensely proud of his national costume. This varies in detail with every craft, and every village has some peculiarity, which is carefully perpetuated; and poor indeed must the Sard be, if his gala dress is in any degree incomplete or incorrect. He would live on the

most frugal fare in order to avoid such a contingency.

A tight vest, well garnished with silver buttons; a full shirt, fastened at the neck and wrists with gold filigree studs; a short full black woollen kilt; full white calico drawers, gathered in under the knee; well fitting gaiters; girdle and garters of richly embroidered leather, fastened with silver buckles; on the head a red or black woven woollen cap; and in the girdle a brass-hilted knife or dagger: these constitute the leading characteristics of the Sard male costume. It is more or less brilliant as to colouring, more or less rich as to ornament. The shepherd, in lieu of the rich vest, wears a loose sleeveless jacket of black sheepskins, the wool outwards. The butchers of Cagliari are attired in a really splendid dress of highly tanned leather, richly wrought with the needle. All wear, in addition to the above, as occasion may require, and as a shelter alike from the mid-day sun, the morning dews, or the damps of the rainy season, a huge cloak with a pointed hood, known as the "cabbanu," or "cabaneddu." They, moreover, sometimes wear a large low-crowned flapping hat; have the hair inserted in a bag or net, or sometimes even wound round the outside of the red cap. This last fashion is of very ancient origin, idols, supposed to be Phœnician, having frequently been found in various parts of the island with the same strange head-gear.

The dress of the women is also very picturesque. It consists of a chemise, with large full sleeves fastened with gold filigree studs; a rich boddiece; a full bright-coloured shirt; an apron, and a lace handkerchief loosely tied under the chin. This, of course, is varied like that of the men. In some parts a red cloth jacket is worn, trimmed with green velvet and gold lace; in others, a loose Moorish kind of dress. Everywhere, the ornaments are of solid gold.

Sards are, more than any other people, fond of gals, generally religious fêtes. On these occasions, which are of constant recurrence, the streets are filled with people, all dressed in their best; they throng the churches, hear mass, and then finish the day with feasting and revelry. Though fond of good living, they are not drunkards, but are indefatigable dancers, if the national "ballo-tondo" can by any means be considered a dance.

Nothing in the wide world can be more exquisitely grotesque than this same "ballo-tondo." Fifty or sixty, nay, hundreds, may, and often do, dance it at a time, hand linked in hand; it is one steady monotonous tramp, tramp, winding and unwinding, one incessant buzz and glitter and whirr; on they go for hours, coiling and uncoiling the apparently measureless chain, to a solemn cadence bellowed forth from the stentorian lungs of a group of choristers fixed in the centre.

Besides the regular saints' days, there are certain local fêtes of a character altogether peculiar. The festa of St. Efisio, for instance, takes place on the 1st of May. St. Efisio is the patron of Cagliari. Accordingly, early in the morning, guns fire, flags fly, bells ring, and all are astir. Men on horseback, sometimes with their wives seated behind them, troop in from neighbouring villages. There is a regular buzz before the doors of the principal

churches; mass duly said, the procession forms. First come the military, accompanied by all the drummers they can muster. Next appear the gentlemen of Cagliari; these are well mounted on richly caparisoned horses, which they manage with skill; they have a dignified but not ungraceful bearing, and do not belie their unmistakably Spanish origin. After them, a whole concourse of peasants, in all the rich variety of native costume, mounted on the graceful, slender, half-Arab horses peculiar to Sardinia, jigging and mincing to the sound of the launedda, a sort of pipe of great antiquity. Then comes the effigy of the Saint himself, in a state coach all gilding and plate-glass, slowly drawn by a pair of huge cream-coloured oxen, of a particular breed kept for this purpose; they are decked with ribbons and flowers, and have an orange stuck on the tips of their horns. The Saint, of life size, is in full canonicals, and is surrounded by large lighted wax tapers.

A host of monks and priests follow in the rear of the Saint, and after them, thousands of people on foot, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, not only from the town, but from the circumjacent villages; the well-born lady in her semi-Parisian toilette, moves about with her stately Spanish gait, side by side with the meanest peasant boy. Lastly, as a close to this singular procession, come a troop of native militia, in their brilliant scarlet dresses: their horses, wild, impetuous, and apparently unmanageable, rear, kick, and plunge, curvet and caracole, after their own approved fashion; quiet riding being considered by Sards in general, and militia men in particular, a very tame and stupid way of proceeding altogether.

In due time all arrive, at a certain hour, at some distance from the city. Here a halt is made. The female and pedestrian portion of this promiscuous assemblage return homewards; the others continue to accompany the Saint, who, after being inducted in a "cabbanu" (cloak) and round hat, as a more suitable dress for travelling, proceeds to the place of his martyrdom, some fifteen miles distant from Cagliari. Here, for three days, there is great feasting and dancing "al fresco," and on the fourth day all return in the same order, and are met at the half-way house by the pedestrians, who thus accomplish their expiatory vow.

In various parts of the island there are also annual local feasts of a semi-religious character, but with distinctive differences. The festa of Santa Maria di Arsequena is perhaps the most remarkable. This festival is held in the bandit neighbourhood, and partakes largely of the ferocious element. Imagine a richly wooded plain, with an undergrowth of myrtle, arbutus, and brilliant wild flowers, and in the midst an eminence, on the summit of which stands a chapel dedicated to the Virgin. The whole plain for several days is teeming with life; here the maze of the "ballo-tondo" whirling along; there, a kicking match. Each kicker is supported on either side by friends, on whose shoulders he leans. Further on is a poetaster, declaiming his own impromptu verses (the language, be it said *en passant*, being very easily adapted to versification). Beyond these are hundreds of horses in groups, tied to the

trees, and adding their quota to the general clamour and excitement. In one place is an impromptu abattoir, where various animals are being slain and prepared for immediate consumption; monstrous rustic cuisines, where primitive spits are turning, pots and pans boiling, frying, and stewing.

The Sard dish, *par excellence*, consists of a huge wild boar, within the carcase of which has been placed a kid, within the kid a sucking pig, and inside that a quail or two; the whole mass is roasted entire in a hole in the ground, lined well on all sides with branches of myrtle, and covered over and under with embers of charcoal. Nothing can exceed the excellence of this primitive dish. The flavour imparted by the myrtle in this delicate manner is exquisite, and few things can rival the flesh of wild boar. There are miniature mountains of water melons, figs, and grapes, of the very finest quality; casks of wine and heaps of macaroni, bread, etc.

Further on may be seen a vast table, composed of myrtle branches, rushes, and sea squill, (*Scilla maritima*), raised to the height of five or six inches, and covering a large surface of ground. Daggers will serve for knives, and horns for drinking vessels. All this grand but simple hospitality is provided by forty head shepherds of the district. At night, friendly parties and family groups sleep under the shade of the beautiful trees. Horses and dogs, as well as men, women, and young children, are coiled up asleep in every direction. Young unmarried Sards of the lower orders are not accustomed to beds; they habitually sleep on mats; it is another remnant of their many eastern customs. So it matters little where they sleep; the "cabbanu" suffices against the dews, and rain there is none in this beautiful month of May.

In the morning the chapel bell rings, and a grand religious procession appears, bringing the sacred banner of Tempio, surmounted by a cross. The privilege of bearing this banner belongs to a particular family. At sight of it, all prostrate themselves, and try to catch hold of a floating corner, which they kiss with wild and earnest devotion. Smile, dear reader, if you will, but only remember that you have greater knowledge. God grant that you also may share the same warmth with your purer faith.

The banner is conveyed three times round the chapel, amidst the tears, groans, prostrations, and sighings of the penitent multitude. There is a cavern beneath the chapel, used as a charnel-house, and some poor wretch, as a penance for some grievous sin, descends to clear the bodies from the opening. After all this, the dancing, singing, and feasting are continued as before, and horse-racing, after the wild and primitive fashion of the country, is introduced. The half-clad figures recline carelessly on the unsaddled backs of their fiery horses, their elfin locks dangling on their smoking flanks, tearing along over streams and brushwood, shrubs and stone, as though they were a part of the wild animals themselves.

Among this vast concourse are numbers of bandits, who mix freely and fearlessly with the multitude. No one dreads them, unless it be the

family with whom they are at feud. They are far too strong in number to be taken up as common offenders, and they have their friends too on all sides; for a bandit is not necessarily considered a bad person by his neighbours. They make an immense distinction between a thief or a poltroon, and a man who has revenged himself. We may see that all these things are the effect of long ages of bad government—a state of things which even now is gradually mending, but which will still require time.

Jealousy, too, is a terrible source of discord. If a young man were to press within his own the palm of the hand of a young woman betrothed to another, it would certainly be the cause of quarrel, and very possibly of bloodshed also. The fingers only may be entwined.

For all these reasons, a festa in the northern district seldom takes place without some one being stabbed by his rival or his hereditary enemy. When a man is assassinated, his body is placed in an open coffin, with a crucifix on his breast. Presently the hired mourners arrive. It is a very strange and ancient custom, long in disuse elsewhere. They wear a black nun-like dress, and enter the house of the murdered man as though they were quite unaware of the circumstance. They then suddenly shriek, tear their hair, roll on the ground, weep, and stretch forth their arms with every wild and weird gesture. Presently one, the leader and chief, rises, and utters in deep guttural tones a sort of recitative, in very figurative language:—

"Behold, the young hunter in the dust—
The pride of his manhood laid low."

He then shrieks,

"Ahi, ahi, ahi!"

"He was brave as a lion of the forest,
Gentle as a lamb of the fold.

Ahi, ahi, ahi

"But cursed be thy vile enemy;
Death shall be his portion to drink.

Ahi, ahi, ahi

"Yes; thou shalt have thy revenge:
The blood of the spoiler shall be spilt.

Ahi, ahi, ahi!

"Thy bloody shirt shall be transmitted to thine avengers,
The token of wrath shall be preserved from one generation to another.

Ahi, ahi, ahi!"

And so it is; a fierce oath of steady vengeance is sworn in presence of the dead, and the bloody shirt is most carefully preserved. Thus is revenge invested with all the binding force of a perverted religious obligation.

Sards, as a rule, are not fickle in their attachments; and though they are quick to resent injury, yet are they warm in their friendships and affections. They show the greatest reverence for age, and consider the ties of blood as closely binding. Moreover, when two persons stand as sponsors, they are called "compari." It is an adopted relationship, held as sacred and fraternal; two such persons may not marry. Betrothals and weddings are attended with very much ceremony. In the Campidano, or southern plain, when a young peasant

has fixed his affections on a young girl, he presents himself in the evening, accompanied by a few friends. He taps gently at the door. Her father, though perfectly aware of his errand, affects entire ignorance, and asks his business. The lover replies, in figurative language, "We seek a lost lamb." The father brings his daughters, and, presenting each in succession, puts the question, "Is this the lamb you seek? or this?" etc., carefully reserving the right one for the last. The lover shakes his head as an expressive negative until he sees the one he has chosen, when he makes great demonstration of delight. "Senali," or mutual presents, are then made, and the pair are betrothed. This is considered binding. Years may, and sometimes do, elapse before the marriage, but it would be highly disgraceful, and much to be resented, if any intention to break off should be discovered.

In the northern district the ceremony varies a little, inasmuch as when the lover and his friends, known by the ancient name of "paralymphos," enter the residence of the bride-elect, they preserve entire silence for some time, until an old and mutual friend rises, and with much ceremony inquires the cause of so many good people coming to the house of his friend. An explanation ensues, when conditions are made, and kisses and presents exchanged. The "enjugu," or betrothal, usually takes place in the presence of a priest, to render it more valid.

A week before the actual wedding there is a grand procession. The future bride and bridegroom, with their friends and relatives, mounted on horseback, in their best gala dresses, attended by the best players on their favourite "launedda," convey the various presents and small property to their new abode. One will carry a looking-glass, another an effigy of the patron saint, articles of attire or of food; and behind all come the bullock wagons, decked with garlands, well laden with furniture and provisions. The wedding is celebrated in the bride's parish, after the banns have been published for three successive weeks. Before leaving her father's house, she and her husband partake of food out of the same plate, and drink out of the same cup. A procession of friends convey the young couple to their home, which is decorated with garlands of flowers and ribbons. They are there welcomed by the matrons of each family, who sprinkle salt and wheat before and over them, in token of duties and responsibilities through all time unto eternity. This also is a relic of the past. The day concludes with feasting, piping, and dancing.

Sards of the upper classes speak very pure and beautiful Italian. They are gentle, kindly, and hospitable; indeed, hospitality is a sacred duty in Sardinia, as there are but few hotels except in the principal towns. Life in these is much after the Italian fashion. The evening promenade, the café, the theatre, the conversazione, an occasional ball, these are the amusements. They are frivolous, but very rarely degenerate into anything more dissipated. The writer spent two years in this interesting island—years never to be forgotten, being

full of pleasant and affectionate reminiscences of this comparatively little known people. Let us hope that Sardinia may share in the light and liberty now dawning on Italy, and by the preaching of the gospel of Christ that many may attain that knowledge which is life eternal.

PEPPER.

COMPARATIVELY few of our readers, perhaps, ever trouble their heads about ascertaining the origin and sources of many apparently insignificant items which contribute more or less to our daily comforts and luxuries. We cannot well conceive a matter of much less importance than a grain of pepper; yet, for the production of that minute particle, upon which may depend a good digestion and its many consequences, what a field of labour is laid open! what countries and climates are painted upon the panorama! From the first sod turned in some distant Indian land, to the moment when it was accidentally blown up your nose, and caused anything but a grateful titillation of the olfactory nerves, what a realm for cogitation presents itself to the contemplative mind! It happened one day, after ridding ourselves of the inconvenience above complained of, that we plunged into a vortex of reflection, and were whirled across many thousands of miles of ocean, to a beautiful little island in some distant straits near the China seas, where, in younger life, we spent some happy years.

The island is Penang, and the plantation now in our mind's eye is devoted to the cultivation of the pepper vine. It belongs to Mr. Chey-Key, a Chinese gentleman, with a very long tail and an extensive straw hat. Chey-Key is the lineal descendant of his grandfather of the same name, who introduced the pepper vine into this island from Sumatra, in the year 1790, Mr. Light, the then governor, advancing him money for this laudable purpose. Our intelligent Chinese friend invites us to a seat close by him, under a shady nutmeg tree, and, being of a communicative disposition, he forthwith initiates us into the mysteries and difficulties of the pepper vine culture.

In the first place, the pepper vine is cultivated or propagated from slips or cuttings, which are planted with uniform precision in long rows, six or eight feet intervening between each plant. At the same period of these being set, supporters are planted, which are usually cuttings from several species of trees, common alike to the Straits and to India; those called the Dedass and Moncooda being preferred, (although the former is delicate and precarious,) because their growth is more rapid, and their form and thickness are best suited for the creeping propensities of the pepper vine. The Moncooda, which is a hardy plant, is reared from seed. When the pepper plant is first set, it has to be covered over with the broad leaves of a tree called the Peah, to protect the young plant from too much exposure to the sun, before it has properly taken root. When about four months old, the leaders are cut off, leaving only three or four shoots, which are trained perpendicularly by being first

attached by twine to small staves driven into the earth close by them, and then gently coaxed on to the proper supporters, to which they speedily attach themselves.

So rapid is the growth of this remarkably pungent plant, whose leaves resemble much in size and colour the *Convolvulus Major*, that in the course of twelve months the vines have attained a height of twelve feet, and are covered with blossoms. This is now the proper time for removing the staves entirely, and for turning the growth of the vines in a downward direction: all the leaves are stripped off the stems, with the exception of a small tuft just at the very top. A pit, twenty inches in diameter and about the same depth, is then dug close to the roots of the vine, and the stem is then coiled horizontally into this pit, leaving the tuft of leaves to be attached to fresh staves planted for the purpose. The pit is then filled up, and the plant in that position is left to thrive. All these are requisite precautions, which give ample occupation to many score of hands which might otherwise, at the season when the pepper vines require most attention, be forced to remain in compulsory idleness.

Soon after the process above stated, the vines begin to increase in size, owing to the number of roots shooting from the recently interred stem, and it is at this period of the vine's growth that all the pepper planter's skill and energy is required in training the vine so as to prevent it ascending too rapidly. For this purpose, the top of the vine and some feet below are detached from the supporter, and not permitted to adhere to it, and being pendent to the ground, the plant throws out side shoots, which increase in bulk proportionately to the height of the mother stem. Though the blossoms now come to maturity even when the plant has attained its third year, the produce is very insignificant; it afterwards, however, rapidly increases, and a vine is considered to have arrived at maturity when it yields two and a half catties of pepper. The plants are said to continue in full vigour for fifteen years, after which period they begin to decline; though, if properly attended to, they have been known to yield up to the thirtieth year.

Our friend Chey-Key tells us that after many years of practical experience, it has been discovered that the soil best adapted for the culture of the pepper vine is a dark loamy mould mixed with gravel. He further states that if, by any neglect or oversight, the roots were permitted to be covered with water for six or eight days, the vines would inevitably perish. In a climate like Penang, therefore, where at some seasons a day hardly elapses without a heavy thunder shower, it keeps Chey-Key and his labourers pretty well upon the alert to provide against this danger. Weeds are another enemy to the pepper plant, and they being so very luxuriant in this soil, it becomes necessary for the earth to be ploughed up at least twice a-year. With care and attention, the pepper vine well recompenses the labour of the planter, yielding as it does two crops a-year, the first of which is gathered in the months of December, January, and February, and the second in May, June, and July.

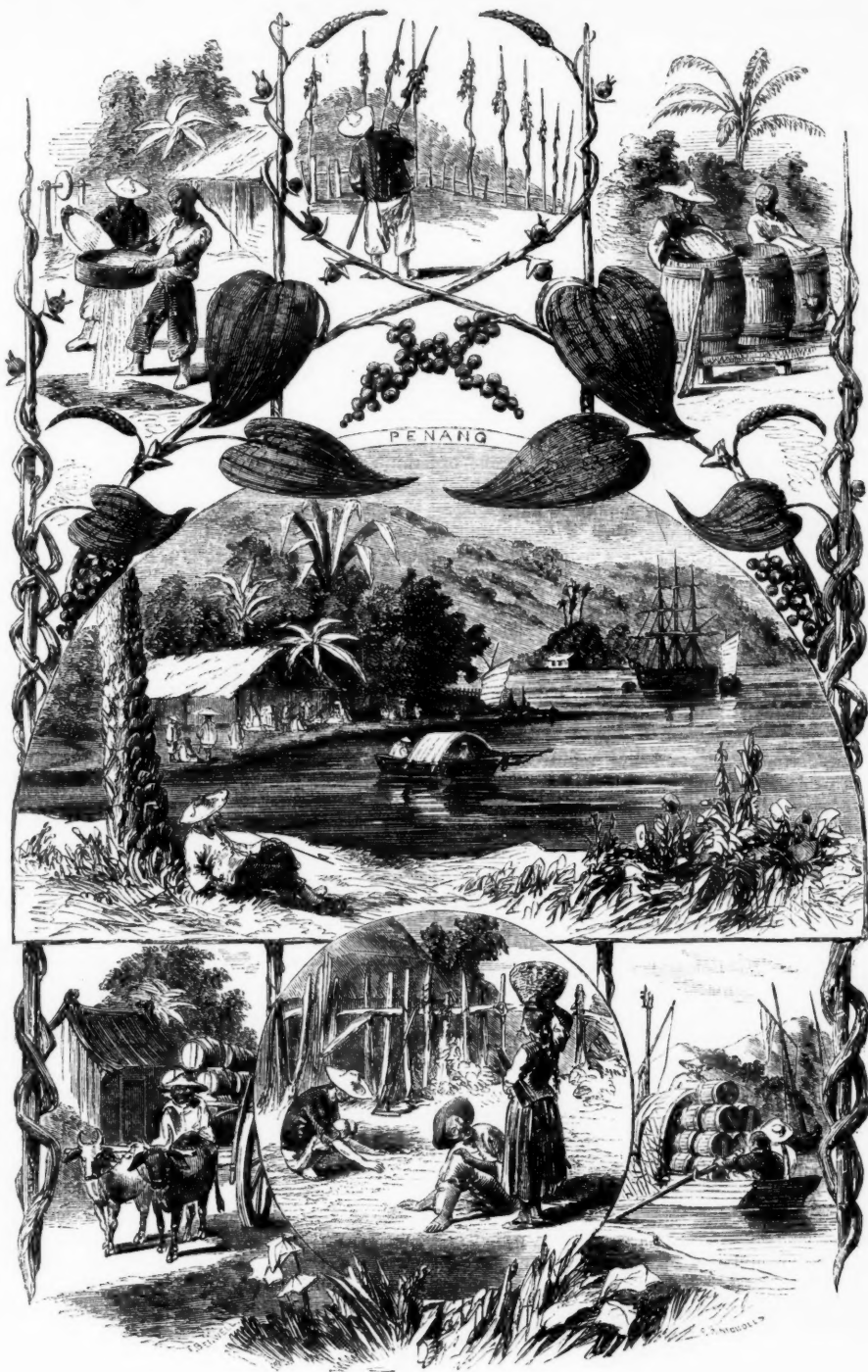
The quality of the pepper depends much upon

the care bestowed in gathering, and also during the drying process. If plucked before fully ripe, it loses in size and weight; and if, on the other hand, permitted to remain until the deep greenish hue of the fruit assures the planter that the proper period for plucking is at hand, then our Chinese informant tells us that a pecul of pepper, properly dried on mats, will yield thirty-six catties. But there are many little *contretemps* which render pepper planting by no means a speculation void of risk and loss, the fruit being subject to blight, even after being well set, should the season prove unusually hot or dry. On such occasions, nearly one-half the produce of a plantation has been known to drop off and be entirely lost, and it is then that Chey-Key may be seen running up to the little hillock in the centre of his plantation, and gazing out anxiously towards the horizon, hoping to espy some cloud not bigger than his hand, which may indicate succour in the hour of need; for a few hours of sharp rain, indicated by the rising clouds, will remedy the evil.

Before bidding our friend good-bye, he informed us that the Penang pepper* is now considered equal, if not superior, to that produced in any other part of the world. As we pass through his plantation, on our way down to the sea-side again, our path leads us through extensive flats, well levelled by artificial means, upon which, in every stage of colour, from deep green to a dingy reddish brown, are countless peculs of pepper, undergoing the drying process previous to being packed for embarkation. There are women and children carrying down basketfuls of the freshly-culled fruit, for the purpose of spreading it on these platforms. There are men, good connoisseurs, who are collecting the ripe pepper. There are more women and children exclusively employed in turning the fruit, so as to expose all parts equally to the heat of the sun. There are noisy Chinese coopers, hard at work preparing small barrels to export the pepper in. There are garrulous Malay women making canvas sacks, into which the pepper is first put before being packed in the barrels. There are screaming porters and bullock-cart drivers, clamouring amongst themselves about the proper loading of the bullock. There are turbulent native boatmen, expostulating with angry English mates under a broiling sun, relative to a missing mark or number. There are bills of lading, stating that the good ship "Lady Pepperpot" has safely laden ever so many hundred barrels of pepper, to be delivered in like good condition to Mr. Spicer's agents in the London Docks.

There is a big ship* rolling lazily upon the un-rippled surface of a boundless waste of ocean. This is the "Lady Pepperpot" becalmed upon the line. It is hot enough, even on deck, though the sun has long set, and the clear silvery light of the moon shines over that wilderness of calm and solitude. There is not a breath out of the heavens, and the captains, mates, and crew, with shirt sleeves tucked up, are panting for breath, and whistling valiantly for a breeze. Why don't the

* White pepper is merely the black pepper deprived of its outer husk by soaking in water, and then re-dried in the sun.



THE PEPPER PLANT (*Piper Nigrum*).

watch go down to bed? What! go below in such weather as this, especially on board of a pepper-laden vessel? You have only to poke your head down the forehatch or the companion, and my word for it you draw it back again as if you had been electrified. There is a fierce hot atmosphere issuing from below; the whole interior of the vessel is perspiring at every pore; the gay paint falls off in flakes, and there is no living, even in the cuddy of the stately ship, until some friendly breeze blows her into cooler latitudes.

LOST IN THE WOODS.

BEFORE the discovery of gold at Vancouver's Island, when the only European residents were confined within the quadrangle of a wooden fort, or, more properly speaking, a stockade, I was on one occasion very nearly perishing in the woods of that beautiful island. The abundance of game of all sorts, and my own love of adventure, tempted me to set out alone, thereby hoping to have a better chance of securing a deer than if accompanied by a comrade. I started for a small stream running into Esquimalt harbour, where the Indians had informed me the animals came at daybreak to drink. I soon found myself following a trail, which I believed led to the desired spot; of this, however, I gradually became doubtful, as the ground began to rise, and the trail grew less distinct as I advanced. The grand trunks of pine trees, towering far above the rest of the forest, and the thick dark foliage they supported, impressed my mind with that indescribable feeling of awe which we experience in the broad silent desert or the perfect calm at sea. I had seen no traces of deer, and the only sounds which had met my ear were the sharp tapping of the large wood-pecker and the flapping wings of the pigeons. The stems of the trees were blackened by the action of fire, and in many places some giant trunk, felled by the wintry gales, lay across my path. I toiled onward, but without finding the stream for which I was in search. The sun was high in the heavens, and all chance of reaching the drinking-place of the deer in time to meet them was at an end.

After taking a biscuit from my pocket and a sip from my flask, I turned to retrace my steps; but in this I was even less successful, for the trail I had followed appeared to be growing less distinct, and branched off in several directions. Hearing a rustling sound in the underwood, I stood quite still, and presently, to my delight, I detected the head of a deer, about two hundred paces in front of me. I raised my gun and fired, when the animal gave a bound, and, as I fancied, fell.

Without thinking of the trail, I ran forward until I reached the exact spot at which the creature was when I pulled the trigger, but he was nowhere to be seen; upon the leaves, however, there were traces of blood, which I followed, hoping soon to come up with the wounded buck. The difficulty of tracing the blood upon the ground became greater, and at length I was compelled to stop and again try to find my way back. After many

fruitless attempts, I was forced to give up, and sit quietly down to think as to my wisest course. The usual expedients by which the Indians regain the lost trail were at that time unknown to me, and having no compass, or any knowledge of the trend of the coast line, I was uncertain in which direction to proceed. I had no watch, and was therefore compelled to guess the hour, by which means alone I could determine my position by the sun, as it was impossible to obtain a sight of the sun's disk. My scanty stock of biscuit was exhausted, and the difficulty of struggling through the scrub had wearied me, so that I fancied it would be wiser to remain where I was, until I could determine my course by the sunset; then I knew that by travelling westward, I must reach the coast. A wolf came near me while seated upon a fallen tree, but I failed to obtain a shot at him, and soon heard his unpleasant howl, far away in the forest.

As soon as the twilight commenced, I began to think the night would prove the most uncomfortable part of my adventure; so, to relieve the gloom, I kindled a fire and collected all the dry wood I could lay my hand on, previously choosing a bare spot of open ground, where there could be no fear of the forest taking fire. Sleep was out of the question, for as soon as darkness set in, I could hear the various predacious animals busy in the distance, and occasionally the light would fall upon the shining eyeballs of a wolf or bear, several of whom were bold enough to approach so near that I could see their forms distinctly. One gaunt old wolf drew so close to me that I could see the glistering of his ugly fangs, and perceive that his skin hung loosely upon his bones. Several times this brute endeavoured to summon courage to face the flames, but a burning piece of wood thrown at him sent him howling back into the gloom. Nothing daunted, he returned to the attack whenever the flames died away, until I put an end to his intrusion by sending a ball through his chest.

At the report of my gun, the whole of the forest seemed alive; birds, bats, and animals of every description, added their sounds to the unearthly screaming of the stricken wolf. Although I had collected a large stock of wood before nightfall, yet, keeping three fires burning, between which I placed myself, soon diminished my supply, and made me impatiently long for the morning; added to this, I now began to suffer from great thirst, not having been able to find any water from the time of my leaving for the woods. As the sun gradually threw its courier beams high into the heavens, the excitement of the nocturnal feeders grew less, and at sunrise I found myself alone once more. After casting a careful glance around on every side, I stepped from my lodging in quest of the wolf I had shot. To my surprise, not a trace of the carcass was to be found. I had no doubt he was killed by my ball, from the quiet way in which he lay for an hour or two afterwards; he must therefore have been carried off by his comrades.

Directly the sun showed, I turned my back to it, and pushed my way through the underwood, having previously reloaded my double-barrel gun. The further I went, the thicker the tangled shrub

became. My thirst was increasing, and my want of rest did not improve my condition. For hours I toiled on, yet never seemed to find the trace of human beings. Sometimes I went through gigantic ferns, where it was quite impossible to steer my course, as, once amongst them, everything else was hidden, they rising many feet above my head. I could hear the deer push through them. I occasionally fired at a squirrel or a bird, in the hope that the report of my piece might reach a stray Indian, and thus bring me help. Another night at length stared me in the face. I searched for berries, but could find none, and water was nowhere to be seen. The ground and wood were parched and dry. I was so exhausted that it was with difficulty I could make a fire; nothing but the stimulus the idea of a prowling wolf, or the loud snuffing of the black bear, gave to my fears, induced me to exert myself.

Towards the morning I noticed a thickness in the air, coming up with the wind, and soon perceived the smell of smoke to windward of my fires. At first I hoped it was some party sent to search for me, and therefore discharged one barrel of my gun. What was my horror, however, while listening for an answer to it, when I heard the crackling of sticks and the roar of flames! The forest was on fire. In my fear I rushed madly forward away from the flames, but they were evidently fast overtaking me; and past me on every side galloped deer, wolves, and bears, while birds of various kinds flew before the clouds of pursuing smoke. In the horror of the moment my thirst was forgotten; the two dreadful nights I had passed were obliterated from my memory, and I struggled on, exerting all my remaining strength. As I burst through a dense growth of ferns I observed an Indian lad running, not away from the fire, but across it. I shouted, and the boy beckoned. In a moment it occurred to me that my only chance of safety was to follow the lad. Throwing my gun and powder away, I gave chase, and notwithstanding his fleetness managed to keep him in sight. Every nerve was strained, every sense on the alert, for already I could feel the heat from the roaring flood of flame. Onward I staggered, the smoke now blinding me, and the oppression being so great that I felt my efforts must soon terminate. Still, I fancied through the distant trees I could see the fire gleam upon the sea. From this time I know no more, for I reeled forward and fell to the ground.

When I recovered myself, I was lying upon the sea shore, close to the water, with several Indians squatting by my side. As I recovered, I became aware of my hair having been burnt, and my clothes very much scorched. It appears that the Indian boy told two of his tribe that I was following him, whereupon they had entered the forest in time to see me fall, and had at great peril dragged me after them to a place of safety. These men proved to be Indians of a friendly tribe, who had been despatched in search of me, upon the promise of some twenty blankets if they brought me in alive. They started the morning after I failed to return, and had followed my trail as far as

the first night-fires, but could not proceed, the underwood having caught light from them; and so they were obliged to take to the coast, where they providentially met with the boy, who stated my being close at hand; and thus my life was saved when lost in the Vancouver Island woods.

COTTON—THE FIRST COTTON LORD.

In the days of the old coaches, there was no road kept in better order, or a pleasanter stage to travel, than the eight miles between Belper and Cromford in Derbyshire, daily traversed by the finest of steeds, at the head of the well-known "Bruce" and "Peveril of the Peak," *en route* between London and Manchester. It winds along alternate sides of the Derwent, flowing through a picturesque valley, bounded on either hand with hills clothed with verdure, and crowned to the summit with woods of oak, birch, and other trees. Occasionally the bare rock appears, rendering the scenery somewhat wild; and the traveller who has been accustomed to the smooth and quiet landscapes of the southern counties, is delighted with the bold features which present themselves at one of the portals to the sterner country of the Peak. Here and there the river is pent up in a narrow channel, or forms a gentle rapid, being obstructed by fragments which have fallen in its bed, or spreads out like a lucid pool, reflecting as a mirror the overhanging foliage. At Cromford, the north extremity, the valley is prolonged by the deep ravine of Matlock Dale, lined on one side with high perpendicular limestone cliffs, while on the other are the wooded slopes of loftier elevations, between which the stream winds its way, with a placid and anon a fretful flow. This favourite summer resort for invalids and idlers—owing to its scenery and mineral springs, where there are now first-rate hotels, boarding-houses, and baths, with a railway—had not been traversed by a carriage at the commencement of the last century. In fact, none could have passed through it, for the rocks then came down in places close to the water's edge, and had to be removed by blasting, in order to form a carriage-road.

It was to this part of the kingdom that Messrs. Arkwright and Strutt directed their attention, when proposing to embark extensively in cotton-spinning by machinery, in order to avail themselves of convenient water-power, and it became the nursery of the factory economy and opulence of Great Britain. In Matlock Dale, but within the chapelry of Cromford, the first cotton-mill in England was erected, in 1771, which exhibited anything like a complete development of the factory system. The building still exists, and is appropriated to its original purpose. Hard by, the finely situated Willersley Castle proclaims the fortunes of one of the partners, as the seat of the present representative of the Arkwright family. Darwin, personifying the cotton-plant by its botanical name, as the nymph *Gossypia*, has commemorated the primitive water spinning-mill in his "Botanic Garden," but with far more of prosy truth than poetry.

"Where Derwent guides his dusky flood
Through vaulted mountains and a night of wood,
The nymph *Gossypia* treads the velvet sod,
And warms with rosy smiles the wat'ry god;
His ponderous oars to slender spindles turns,
And pours o'er massy wheels his foaming urns;
With playful charms her hoary lover wins,
And wields his trident while the monarch spins.
First, with nice eye, emerging Naiads cull
From leathery pods the vegetable wool;
With wiry teeth *revolving cards* release
The tangled knots, and smooth the ravell'd fleece;
Next, moves the *iron hand* with fingers fine,
Combs the wide card, and forms th' eternal line;
Slow, with soft lips, the *whirling can* acquires
The tender squeins, and warps in rising spires;
With quickened pace *successive rollers* move,
And these retain, and those extend, the roe;
Then fly the spokes, the rapid axes glow,
While slowly circumsolves the lab'ring wheel below."

Another mill was erected at Belper, in 1776, towards the south extremity of the valley, and soon afterwards a third at Milford, about a mile distant, on the same stream. It is somewhat remarkable that Lombe's silk-mill, the first in England, dating from the year 1720, stands on the same side of the same river at Derby, some eight miles lower down, and is still used for its original purpose, after the lapse of a hundred and forty years. But the Derwent did not prove to him a prime mover to fortune, as in the case of the two cotton-spinners, for he died suddenly, soon after the completion of the building. The oldest cotton-mill at Manchester is that on Shude Hill, erected about the year 1780, one of Arkwright's enterprises in conjunction with other partners. Five years later, in 1785, steam-power was first applied to cotton-spinning, at Sapplewick in Nottinghamshire. In 1857, according to a parliamentary return, the total number of cotton factories in the United Kingdom amounted to 2210, giving employment to 379,213 persons. The erection and furniture of a first-class mill now involves the expenditure of a fortune; and some Manchester warehouses of cotton goods are superb palatial buildings.

The partnership between Arkwright and Strutt was dissolved in 1781, upon which the former retained the works at Cromford, and the latter those at Belper and Milford. Mr. Jedediah Strutt founded a vast business, and realized great wealth. After residing a few years at Belper he removed to Derby, where the first English calicoes were made by him, and the first fire-proof mill ever built was erected; the floors being all constructed on brick arches, and paved with brick. The building remains, but has long ceased to have any connection with cotton. Derby has since been the main centre of the commercial operations of the firm, and Belper of their factories. Mr. Strutt died in 1797, in the seventy-first year of his age, and was succeeded by his three sons, William, George, and Joseph, all now deceased. They had been associated with their father in his great concerns; conducted them afterwards with progressive enterprise, intelligence, and success; and were alike distinguished for literary taste and liberality of feeling. Soon after Moore, the poet, ensconced himself in his cottage at Mayfield, Derbyshire, they sought him out, and are frequently referred to in his letters published by Lord John Russell. Thus he writes to a friend, under the

date of 1813: "Bessy and I have been on a visit to Derby for a week, at Mr. Joseph Strutt's, who sent his carriage and four for us, and back again with us. There are three brothers of them, and they are supposed to have a million of money pretty equally divided between them. They have fine families of daughters, and are fond of literature, music, and all those elegancies which their riches enable them so amply to indulge themselves with. Bessy came back full of presents, rings, fans, etc. Mysinging produced some little sensation at Derby." Again, the following year, he writes to another:—"I suppose you have heard that we have been to Derby; and a very pleasant visit we had of it. I like the Strutts exceedingly; and it is not the least part of my gratification to find a very pretty girl of sixteen reading the sixth book of Virgil, and not at all spoiled by it. This is Joseph Strutt's eldest girl, a classic, and a poetess in the bargain. Indeed, they have quite a nest of young poets in that family; they meet once a week, and each brings a poem upon some subject; and I never was much more surprised in my life than in looking over their collection. I do not think I wrote half so well when I was their age. Then they have fine pianofortes, magnificent organs, splendid houses, most excellent white soup, and are, to crown all, right true Jacobins, after my own heart, so that I passed my time very agreeably amongst them, and Bessy came away loaded with presents." One of Moore's characteristic failings is here very transparent; and it clung to him to the end of his days. Obligations to others, which would have been oppressive to minds of ordinary delicacy and independence, were to him positive enjoyments; and he was never chary of compliments in relation to those who placed the good things of life at his disposal, whether carriages, fine houses, state drawing-rooms, or bank-notes.

Mr. William Strutt, the father of Lord Belper, became F.R.S., founded the Derby Mechanics' Institute—one of the most prosperous bodies of its class—and was a leading member of the Philosophical Society, established in the town by Dr. Darwin, in 1788. Owing to his mechanical genius, he was the means of introducing many improvements in the machinery of cotton-mills; and having been intimately acquainted with Arkwright, he supplied Mr. Brayley with the account of the Cromford cotton-works, inserted in the third volume of his "Beauties of England and Wales." But his younger brother, Joseph Strutt, specially won golden opinions from his townsmen by urbanity of manner and princely liberality; and he became their first mayor, after the passing of the Corporation Reform Bill. In the year 1840, shortly before his death, he presented them with a beautiful park, or arboretum, vesting it in the municipal council as trustees on the part of the inhabitants; and on the opening day, which was kept as a general holiday, some graceful and appropriate observations were addressed by him to a public assembly. He spoke of the increase in the trade and population of the town—its position as a railway centre—the spread of information among the people—its effect in alienating them from vulgar or brutal diversions

—the deficiency of sites for legitimate recreation— and of his own provision to supply a local want. "It has often been made a reproach to our country," he observed, "that, in England, collections of works of art, and exhibitions for instruction and amusement, cannot, without danger of injury, be thrown open to the public. If any ground for such a reproach still remains, I am convinced that it can be removed only by greater liberality in admitting the people to such establishments; by thus teaching them that they are themselves the parties most deeply interested in their preservation, and that it must be the interest of the public to protect that which is intended for the public advantage. If we wish to obtain the affections of others, we must manifest kindness and regard towards them; if we seek to wean them from debasing pursuits and brutalizing pleasures, we can only hope to do so by opening to them new sources of rational enjoyment. It is under this conviction that I dedicate these gardens to the public; and I will only add, that, as the sun has shone brightly on me through life, it would be ungrateful in me not to employ a portion of the fortune which I possess in promoting the welfare of those among whom I live, and by whose industry I have been aided in its acquisition." These generous sentiments were warmly applauded by the audience; and at night a delighted multitude sang the "Fine Old English Gentleman" before the house of the speaker and donor.

These gardens, thus presented to his townsmen, cost the giver upwards of £10,000. They were laid out by Mr. Loudon, with characteristic skill and taste, and comprise neat entrance lodges in the Tudor and Elizabethan styles, broad gravelled walks, grassy plots, raised beds planted with evergreens and flowering shrubs, with ornamental summer-house and arbours. Close to each tree or botanical specimen, a small tablet is fixed, inscribed with a number, on referring to which, in a cheap catalogue, information is found of interesting particulars respecting it; such as the country in which it principally grows, the date of its introduction into England, the height when full grown, and its uses. In various parts of the grounds the notice occurs:—"This Arboretum has been given to the public for their advantage and enjoyment, and is placed under their special care and protection. It is hoped, therefore, that the public will assist in protecting the trees, shrubs, and seats from injury, and in preserving the property which is devoted to their use."

Public walks, gardens, and parks, or open spaces for exercise and athletic games, are very simple, important, and needed arrangements in the economy of large towns, which are commonly close agglomerations of bricks, mortar, and men. They tend to promote the health of confined populations, and supersede the mischiefs arising from resort to skittle-alleys and taverns, to which the working classes are led by a common appetite for diversion. Many years ago, the French Conseil de Salubrité recorded the wish to see established in the centre of every quarter of a town, a spacious square, railled in and planted with trees, in which the children of all classes might without apprehension

give themselves up to the exercise suitable to their years, and the inhabitants of all ages enjoy the sunbeams, with a purer air than that of their own dwellings. But, apart from considerations of health and pastime, it is of high value as a point of social policy, to foster the natural sentiment of attachment to the spot where life commenced, and conciliate the affections of the people towards the scenes with which existence is associated, by rendering them attractive. He who looks with mingled emotions of gratitude and pleasure upon the locality that daily meets the eye, will be so far prejudiced in favour of a career of peaceful and useful citizenship, while he who has no sympathy with local objects is at the mercy of every temptation to a course of social or political incendiarism. The public are therefore wisely employed when, by voluntary associations or personal benevolence, so nobly exemplified by the founder of the Derby Arboretum, they adopt measures calculated to attach the hard-faring masses of society to the outward scenes in which their lot is cast. His gift was the more valuable as the first example of the kind, since followed by municipal bodies and opulent individuals in other parts of the country. Two years later, in 1842, a foreign tourist remarked of smoky and begrimed Manchester, that "there was no public park or green in which the labouring population could enjoy healthy exercise and recreation." This evil has now been remedied.

The position of a mill-owner is one of grave responsibility. He is the monarch of a little kingdom, and, his rule being largely despotic, partakes of the evils of that form of government, as its nature depends mainly on the personal character of the chief. The three Stratts belonged to the class of masters sufficiently enlightened to perceive that, while discharging a duty, they were consulting their own interests, in promoting the comfort of their workpeople and advancing their moral, intellectual, and corporeal improvement. This management has been continued by their sons, the present proprietors of the vast establishments at Belper and Milford. Cotton factories are not suggestive of the agreeable to the eye, as they are generally huge ugly piles of brick, blackened by the smoke of the steam-engines. But these mills are plain buildings of hewn stone, that material abounding in the neighbourhood; and, as steam-power is not employed, they do not interfere with the picturesqueness of the river, with its ranges of hills and overhanging woods. They are driven altogether by eighteen magnificent water-wheels, possessing the power of six hundred horses. A self-acting governor attached to each wheel, adjusts its velocity to the purposes of the factory, and is never in a state of repose, but is seen incessantly tightening or slackening the reins of the mill-gearing, so to speak, according to the number of machines moving within, and the force of the stream acting without. The rooms are well ventilated, and as clean as any gentleman's parlour. A neat refectory is fitted up, where any of the operatives who choose, may have a pint of tea or coffee, including milk and sugar, for one halfpenny; and, in addition, those who regularly join in this

refreshment become entitled to medical attendance gratis. Her Majesty, when the Princess Victoria, with her mother, the Duchess of Kent, went over the works in 1832, and are the only royal personages who have ever set foot within a cotton-mill.

Chiefly under the auspices of this enterprising family, Belper, an insignificant hamlet at the commencement of the century, has become a handsome stone-built town, where the operatives dwell in substantial houses, at an easy rental, under the masters as landlords. The Strutts find steady employment and the means of comfortable subsistence to a population of many thousand individuals, of whom Dr. Ure remarked that, in reference to health, domestic comfort, and religious culture, they contrast most favourably with the average of agricultural communities. An experiment once made by the work-people may be noticed, of interest from the fair trial it received, and its acknowledged failure. A number of them formed themselves into a society on the co-operative plan, for the purpose of laying in provisions and clothing in the wholesale market, and thus benefit by the profits which usually go to the retailer. The scheme seemed feasible. It received the sanction of the proprietors, and one of them became a member of the managing committee. The goods were bought for ready money at the lowest current price, and were distributed to the members according to their wishes and means. For some time the plan worked well, and the money profits, or balance of the savings at the end of the year, when divided, occasionally amounted to as much as nearly paid their house rents. But at length the infirmities of human nature were acted on. Agents of the wholesale dealers found that, by a bonus judiciously given to some influential committee-man, treasurer, or secretary, they could secure orders, and even dispose of indifferent articles, at a price above the ready money value. Hence arose suspicions, and then wranglings, until, after the experience of thirteen years, the plan was voluntarily abandoned by the parties to it. The experiment has convinced many that the open competition of common shopkeepers afforded the greatest security for obtaining goods of the best quality at the most reasonable price.

Edward Strutt, the present head of the firm, now a peer, was born at St. Helen's, Derby, in 1801, and educated at Cambridge, where he took the degree of Master of Arts. He entered parliament as member for his native town, took part in the stormy debates of the first Reform Bill, and soon afterwards married Emily, daughter of Dr. Otter, Bishop of Chichester. He held office from 1846 to 1848, as Chief Commissioner of Railways; again, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, from January, 1853, to June, 1854; and was created Lord Belper in August, 1856.

The story of the peerage exhibits many striking examples of family decadence. Not long ago, the representative of the earldom of Mar was a labourer in a Northumbrian coal-pit; and the lineal representative of the great baron, bold and brave, Simon de Montfort, who was for a time the master of the kingdom, is said to be at this moment a saddler in Tooley Street. On the other hand, the peerage

has been largely recruited from the ranks of honourable industry, often originally very obscure. "In olden times," says Mr. Smiles, in his "Self-Help," "the wealth and commerce of London, conducted as it was by energetic and enterprising men, was a prolific source of peerages. Thus, the earldom of Cornwallis was founded by Thomas Cornwallis the Cheapside merchant; that of Essex, by William Capel the draper; and that of Craven, by William Craven the merchant-tailor. The modern Earl of Warwick is not descended from the King-maker, but from William Greville the woolstapler; while the modern Dukes of Northumberland find their head, not in the Percys, but in Hugh Smithson, a respectable London apothecary. The founders of the families of Dartmouth, Radnor, Ducie, and Pomfret, were respectively a skinner, a silk manufacturer, a merchant-tailor, and a Calais merchant; while the founders of the peerages of Tankerville, Dormer, and Coventry, were mercers. The ancestors of the Earl of Romney, and Lord Dudley and Ward, were goldsmiths and jewellers; and Lord Dacres was a banker in the reign of Charles I, as Lord Overstone is in that of Queen Victoria. Edward Osborne, the founder of the dukedom of Leeds, was apprentice to William Hewit, a rich cloth-worker on London Bridge, whose only daughter he courageously rescued from drowning, by leaping into the Thames after her, and eventually married. Among other peerages founded by trade, are those of Fitzwilliam, Leigh, Petre, Cowper, Darnley, Hill, and Carrington." To these may be added Foley, Normanby, Ashburton, and now, Belper.

These papers began with reference to cotton, the raw material, and they may appropriately close with a return to the subject. Long has our dependence upon the United States for the main supply of the product been viewed with anxiety by all parties in this country, as leaving us without resource in case of failure; and with deep sorrow by vast numbers, as every fibre from that quarter is obtained by the enforced labour of slaves. Let but a frost occur at the wrong season of the year, or a general revolt of the bondsmen, and it is scarcely possible to picture the consequent misery to ourselves, as the whole crop would be lost to us. A mayor of Manchester has stated that he could not estimate the calamity that would ensue, if that town were to lose the supply of cotton for a single month; and that he often wondered how they could sleep in their beds with only a stock for ten or eleven weeks on hand. It is hence satisfactory to know that this dependence is gradually abating, owing to the development of new sources of supply; and every effort should be made to put an end to it altogether, in order that we may not have to lean upon a single prop for an article of national importance, and be free from the odious imputation of contributing commercially to uphold the accursed system of American slavery. The plains of Bengal grew cotton before the New World was discovered; those of Australia and Africa are capable of doing so likewise; and in the interests of humanity, let us create new fields of produce wherever we can, to drive out of culture slave-grown cotton.

ANIMAL MUMMIES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CURIOSITIES OF NATURAL HISTORY."



THE IBIS.

We have seen in our last paper that the Egyptians made their cats into mummies. I now give a list of the other creatures which were equally honoured, and which will give an idea to what an extent they carried this practice. Mummies have been discovered of the lion, wolf, dog, jackal, fox, hyena, bear, ichneumon, shrew-mouse, deer, goat, ram, sheep, lamb, bull, hippopotamus, and monkey. Among birds, the vulture, eagle, falcon, hawk, owl, and ibis, (found particularly at Hermopolis,) goose and swallow. Of the amphibia, crocodile, toad, lizard, etc.; among fish, carp, pike, etc.; insects, principally the scarabæus; and lastly, vegetables, especially the lotus, and, of all things in the world, the onion.*

The most abundant mummies out of this long list are, I believe, those of the ibis. When the late lamented engineer, Mr. Brunel, returned from Egypt, he was kind enough to present me with a fine specimen of a mummy ibis. It was a shapeless, dirty, brown-looking mass, and portions of it crumbled under the fingers. I was nevertheless determined to look inside; so, with dissecting scalpel, scissors, and fine-toothed saw, I began to dissect it out. The mummy had evidently been submitted to the action of a slow but powerful heat after it had been prepared, for, on removing the outer semi-burned bandages, the bird itself was found to be inclosed in a solid and hard mass of bituminous substance, *i.e.*, the original embalming material remelted by the subsequent fire. How and when the fire took place, who can say?

A few taps with a chisel caused a large cake of the embalming material to fall off, and underneath it was seen the wing of the bird, the feathers carefully smoothed and properly arranged. For about half an hour after their exposure to the air, the shining lustre of these feathers was iridescent, like mother-of-pearl; but this appearance soon vanished. On the under side of the piece broken off were the most beautiful and delicate markings of the structure of the feather—a complete cast, in fact, in bitu-

men. This substance must have been placed in a very hot and fluid state on the body of the bird, or the impressions would not have been so perfect; they are quite as good as the finest medallion castings in plaster of paris.

It was for some time difficult to make out anything but the wings, which formed a sort of shroud to the body; but at last, a bit of bone projecting at the end of the mummy gave a hint; the bone was followed up, the wing cut away, and the thigh, leg, foot, and toes, with the scaly skin still on them, exposed (see the figure). Alongside the leg was placed the head, in an exceedingly perfect condition. The bill, six inches long, extended down to the end of the mummy, where it was broken off; the eyes were seen, dry and hard like those of a chicken that has hung a long time in a poulterer's shop; the nostrils were distinctly visible, likewise the large aperture of the ear, telling us that our friend in life could both see, hear, and smell well, and kept good watch and guard when stalking along the muddy banks of the Nile, possibly watching the workmen of Cheops building the great pyramid, or possibly old Herodotus himself climbing up it, note-book in hand; or, could we but know what those eyes have seen, what those ears have heard, we could indeed write a good paper for the Antiquarian or Ethnological Societies. If, however, we are ignorant of what ibis saw and heard, we have some clue to what he had for dinner. It has been stated that the scales of a serpent have been found in a mummy ibis. I was not so lucky as to find these, but when chiselling out the neck of the bird, a portion of bitumen gave way, and the contents of the body fell out. Amongst this black mass of shapeless dust, the finger detected something hard; in a few minutes I had picked out some eight or ten little gravel and quartz stones, about the size of turnip seeds or small split peas. How did these stones get there? Not many years ago, an ancient Briton was dug up on the downs, not far from Didcot Station, on the Great Western Railway, and in the place where his stomach had once been, was discovered a hard mass of raspberry seed. There was such a matted lump of them, that a medico-antiquarian bystander gave it as his belief that the ancient Briton died of indigestion from eating too many raspberries.* In our ibis we found no seeds, but stones; most birds, and among them the ibis, swallow stones to help the horny coats of their gizzards to grind up their food.

Now, when the embalmer prepared our specimen, he did not take out the gizzard: there it remained till it crumbled into dust; and when the bird was again opened, some three or four thousand years afterwards, at Regent's Park Barracks, out fell the stones. The stones tell us that they had been rolled about by water before the bird swallowed them, and that they had been performing the office of "miller's assistants" for some time, for their edges are further worn down and partially polished by the action of the gizzard. I only wish this ibis had dined shortly before death, and then we might

* Pettigrew's "History of Egyptian Mummies."

* Some of these seeds were planted, and grew into fine specimens of the wild raspberry.

have found some traces of his dinner. He was probably an invalid bird, and had fed only upon "slops," which left no trace behind them.

I have dissected a second ibis since the specimen I am now describing, and found the same kind of stones; and these particulars may, I think, be fairly adduced to prove that, if we will only listen, we may hear "sermons from stones." We talk of the antiquity of the ibis and the ancient Egyptians; the stones from this bird's gizzard laugh at us. How far back in the physical history of our planet must we go to know the history of these little fragments of some ancient quartz mountain range, which in all probability witnessed the first rays of the sun as they dispelled the dark and murky clouds of chaos, when this earth was yet young in creation.

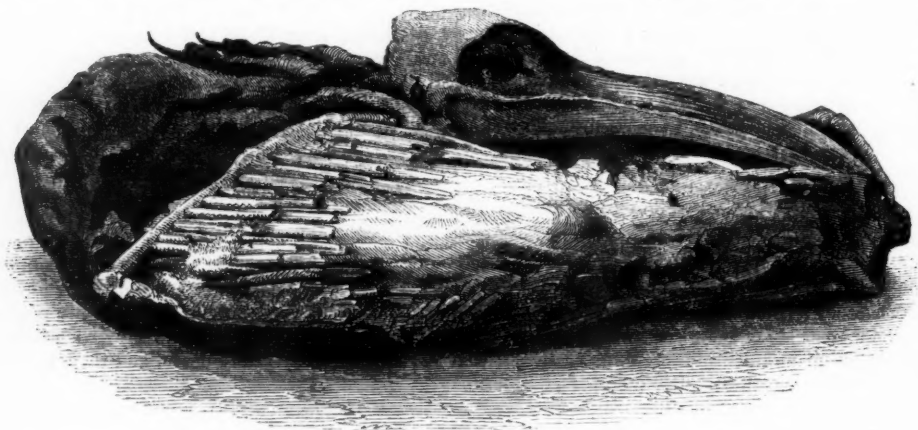
But have we nothing else in the body of our ibis to comment upon? Yes, surely, here are some dozen little beetles, which have fallen out of its body. What will they tell us? They buzz out, "We are well-known insects to dissectors of mummies; our name is 'Dermestes Pollinetus,' and pollinetus means, prepared for the grave or funeral. We are carrion-eaters, and have near relations in England, called 'ham-hoppers,' which much plague the ham merchants and the leather dealers. We have capital noses for stinking animal substances; and when the ibis in which we were found was being made into a mummy, it was very hot weather, and we smelt him out; the embalmers went away to dinner; we then crawled up into the body of the bird (for they had 'trussed' him, as the modern poulterers call this operation, taking out the intestines and leaving the gizzard only), and while we were eating away, and thinking about laying our eggs, the embalmers returned. They did not know we were inside. They stopped up the hole where we came in, with a bit of mummy cloth; we could not get out, and when the bird was dipped into hot pitch, we folded our wings and died. And now here we are, hard and dry, but still perfect, all but our legs, which have got broken off. Ah! it was a sad day for us when we entered the open and bowel-less bird to get our dinners, and we have been there quite long enough, and are

right glad to see the sun again, though the light seems different from the light we have been accustomed to; and you, Mr. Inquisitive, are not like that old, long-bearded, spice-smelling Egyptian embalmer who shut us up in our prison."

But why was our ibis made into a mummy at all? Why did not his captor wring his neck and cook him? Know, then, that the ibis was sacred to the god Thoth, and that Thoth was Mercury of the Romans. It has been remarked (as you may remark to-morrow in the Zoological Gardens) that when this bird, like the robin of nursery fame,

"Tucks his head under his wing, poor thing,"

he has some resemblance to the heart. The Egyptians believed that the heart was the seat of intellect; (so do the valentine writers of the present day); both seem to have ignored, and still do ignore, the brain and its mysterious mind batteries, the head-quarters of the intellect, whether we write about mummies, or whether we think about our lady loves. However, as the bird resembled the heart, he was, in the mythology of the time, promoted to a high office, viz., to "preside over and inspire all the sacred and mystical learning of the Egyptian hierarchy;" and if they built mechanics' institutes in those days, they most likely put the figure of an ibis over the door, and not a bust of Minerva, as we do in the present day. Others think that ibis was considered sacred because he destroyed snakes and reptiles. I doubt it. He was much like a common curlew in shape and habits, and though he might snap at a good fat frog, he would not probably notice a snake. Anyhow, the Egyptian ibis family of the present day will not even look at a snake, for I have tried the living birds at the Zoological Gardens with a snake, and instead of making a meal of the unfortunate snake forthwith, the ibis hopped and shuffled away from it in a most un-ibis-like manner; a nice active lob-worm is much more in his way. The Egyptian "game laws," as regards ibis, were severe, for if anybody killed an ibis on purpose he was put to death; if he killed the bird accidentally, provided that he "displayed a proper amount of grief," he was *only fined*! Think of that, ye county magistrates, and learn from "the wisdom of the Egyptians."



IBIS MUMMY EXAMINED BY F. T. DUCKLAND, ESQ.